

## **DARLING, OH MY DARLING...**

*After a splendid weekend of glorious sunny weather in Cape Town, we awakened with the pitter-patter of rain on our balcony. It's Tuesday, 21 Aug. Karin and I planned a daytrip to Darling ...*

This review was only supposed to be about our daytrip to Darling. But once again, Cape Town surprised me and I had to, yes, sorry, had to tell you about it.

We departed on Thursday, 16 August, from Lanseria to Cape Town. ([www.lanseria.co.za](http://www.lanseria.co.za)) These pictures are sure to tempt you: besides the hostesses offering you coffee while you're reading the complimentary newspaper, there is also a 'self-service station' complete with coffee machine (photo left). The lounge is tastefully decorated with baskets and fabulous comfy chairs. Although Lanseria Airport only flies to Cape Town in the morning and



back in the afternoon, the luxurious lounge does it for me. There are no stampeding, fresh coffee (gratis) and friendly staff.

Our flat in Cape Town wasn't ready yet, so we drove to Stellenbosch. We had a look at the burnt Eendrag hostel. Rumours had it that the students got back on Thursday morning (Women's Day) from partying, were hungry, had meat but no braai. Took a broken upholstered chair, ignited it and the rest is ... history.

To feed our hungry tummies, we turned into Church Street and parked at D' Ouwe Werf. ([www.ouwewerf.com](http://www.ouwewerf.com)) It's Stellenbosch's oldest and most historic hotel with this amazing restaurant. They still had the breakfast dishes on display and I really, really wanted some cheese. Hein ordered a chicken pie with vegs. With my cheese and leek soup, they served me homebaked straight-out-of-the-oven seed bread! It was sooooo good! Our waiter was Purdon and very efficient. In Summer you can sit outside on this gorgeous patio, with vines



trailing all over. The streets in Stellenbosch do not offer ample parking, but at D' Ouwe Werf there is a 'valet parking' area to consider.



On Friday night we met up with Pieter, one of Hein's university friends.

We ended up in Jan Kats(z) – a pub on the top floor of Stellenbosch Hotel, c/o Dorp and Andringa Streets. On our very first date, (a blind date) after dinner, Hein and myself had a nightcap at Jan Kats(z). Memories ...

Saturday morning we drove to the Waterfront for breakfast at Balducci's. ([www.balduccis.co.za](http://www.balduccis.co.za)) Now, interestingly enough, when I mentioned this restaurant to a few people, they all had bad experiences.



Previously, Hein ordered an omelette with tomato, cheese and rocket and found the tastes amazing. This time he ordered the farmhouse omelette and was a bit disappointed, but still liked it. Still in the 'cheese mode', I opted for the cheese platter. It took a while, but we had wonderful coffee and it was worth the wait. The platter is R120, but is definitely for 2 people.

You also have a choice of water biscuits (on photo) or toasted focaccia and the latter is definitely worth it! You choose your own 6 cheeses and the portions are not small. They had a divine fig preserve, fresh salad leaves, strawberries, dried fruit, fresh grapes and olives. The Boland Blue cheese was divinely creamy and soft.

On Saturday evening, we had a 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party at the Mowbray Club. When Hein started in the IT-business (1994) in Johannesburg, Greg Rawlins was his boss. Since then Hein has kept contact with Greg (now in Cape Town).

At the top of this page, I mentioned our 'blind date'. Shirley Rawlins worked with me in 1990 at attorneys. (She was from Matatiel, Natal.) In August '90, Shirley arranged a formal dinner and I needed a partner. Didn't know any male friends to accompany me and a 'blind date' was arranged for me. Thus entered Hein and we got married etc etc.

JUST BE PATIENT – THE WHOLE STORY WILL BE REVEALED TO YOU ...

A month ago I had lunch with my friend, Alice. Her friend Lisalot and her mom joined us. Lisalot's mom said something about Matatiel. I mentioned that I knew Shirley Rawlins and they both knew her. Shirley has a 2-year old boy and 4-month old twins. Shirley's very tiny and after the twins, has to walk with a crutch. But for some reason, I assumed that Shirley is now staying in Matatiel.

BACK TO THE 50<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY PARTY – we met some nice people at our table and were chatting away, when I looked up, saw a sideway glimpse of this woman's face ... and she's walking with a crutch ...

SHE REMEMBERED ME! Yes, it was Shirley. Upon asking her why she's at the party – HOLD ONTO YOUR SEATS – Greg Rawlins (the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday boy) is her COUSIN! And Shirley and family stay in Stellenbosch.

Needless to say, I was gob-smacked and shell-shocked for the rest of the evening. The world is so small. Next time I'll go and visit her and the kids.

Even though the weather forecasted a cold front, we had the most awesome weather in the Cape. Beautiful open skies, sun shining – everything green and fresh.

Monday night we drove through to Stellenbosch to meet up with a friend and life coach, Louise, and her friend Fanie. We booked a table at Moyo, Spier. (<http://www.moyo.co.za/content.asp?subID=50>)

When we arrived there, we were taken to this 'treetop table'. Seriously! In the treetops. Luckily, it wasn't that cold and they had 2 heaters and nice, fluffy blankets.



These photo's were taken during the day. Left is the 'treetop table' area. Right is the rest of the restaurant, which would be spectacular day- or nighttime. They do not have an a la carte menu, but a full buffet. A bit pricy (R180 per person), but it does provide you with a load of choices. We had some lovely fish dishes, stunning veggies and scrumptious lamb shanks and casseroles.

Definitely try to book the 'treetop table'. It is an amazing experience, with water tinkling all around you. The ladies wash your hands beforehand with rosewater and if you wish, paint your face.

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Despite the rain, we decided to drive to Darling. ([www.darlingtourism.co.za](http://www.darlingtourism.co.za)) Saw lots and lots of arum lilies – growing wildly (although I do believe it's illegal to pick them.) It was still raining a bit, but when we stopped at 'Evita se Perron' it stopped. For the rest of the day!



Evita se Perron ([www.evita.co.za](http://www.evita.co.za)) – what a place!

Filled with old furniture, gold mirrors, hundreds and hundreds of fairy-lights and photo's and paintings everywhere – even in the bathroom!

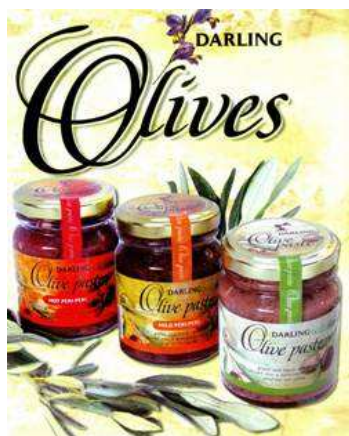
We shared a light and fluffy scone and had a good browse

through all the letters and memorabilia – dated back as far as 1961!

A craft centre for the local people has been started and they sell beautifully handcrafted pillows, blankets and gifts.

Years ago we visited a mission church in Darling – converted into a home. It was spectacular. Although I've lost the film and have to rely on my memories. Karin and I found the church and had a look around. Although empty, it's still a magnificent little place. The previous lady rented the cottage as a home and used the church for an art gallery. Can you image that ambience.

Ormonde ([www.ormonde.co.za](http://www.ormonde.co.za)) was our next stop. A wine and olive estate. We tasted some olive paste and bought a few bottles of wine, olives and paste. On the dam, we also saw a few white swans floating around.



### **Olive Crusted Grilled Steak**

1 kg Rump Steak  
2 tbsp Darling Olive Paste

*Grill Rump Steak as usual. Spread Darling Olive Paste over the steak for the last five minutes of cooking, turning briefly to sear the paste to the meat. Serve with chips and salad.*

In Darling's main street, we found 'The Marmelade Cat'. A tiny restaurant with some interesting gifts. We also popped into 'Nostalgia' next door. (<http://darlingtourism.co.za/historydetail.htm>)

Stunning old, old furniture, an amazing wooden butcher's block, beautiful chinaware and lots of little trinkets.



For lunch we popped into 'Simone.' It used to be the Brig's Barn Country Stall. Lovely warm interior (loooove the red walls) and a hearty crackling fire. We chose to share the 'pork belly' and just as well – the portions were huge. It was heavenly – served with a creamy, smooth mash and freshly steamed broccoli. Karin tried the 'Russian tart' which I believe is also called a 'jodekoek of jodetert'. Basically thin sponge layers smothered in thick creamy custard.



After 'waving' goodbye to Darling, we drove through Yzerfontein and then back to Cape Town. Of course the sun shone the rest of the week ...

Our flight was scheduled for Friday afternoon. Somehow we missed it. Kobus and Linda (friends and colleagues) planned to attend a rotary evening in Saldanha and managed to obtain tickets for us as well as a bed for the night at Nina & Pierre's house.

The rotary evenings are all fundraising events and good fun. Upon arrival, you buy a polystyrene hat filled with 3 bags of peanuts (unshelled). Golly you would think – so much peanuts to eat ... NO, NO!

The peanuts are to throw – at – everyone around you. They also sell huge, plastic glasses/goggles and believe me – you need it!



I don't like hats, so I took a beating there, but the glasses helped a lot! (Photo centre) Those are all peanuts on the floor. (Photo right) Kobus and Linda with loads of peanuts on the table. Later-on, we just collected peanuts from the floor.



(Left) This guy protected him well and was just concerned about his drink.  
(Centre) What a nice action shot, Hein! Linda throwing and Nina protecting her face.  
(Right) Pierre ready to launch!

With all the peanuts on the floor, it was extremely slippery and quite a few people fell down.

On Saturday we flew back with SAA. Kulula has no flights to Lanseria over the weekend. Hugo, Hein's brother, had to fetch us at O. Tambo International airport and took us to Lanseria to fetch our car.

Why does my arm hurt though? I only realised later it's because of the 'peanut hurling'.

It was good to be back home again!